

## Message Text

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ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-11 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DRC-01 /081 W

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R 301910Z JAN 74

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6364

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB,HXG, ICFTU

SUBJECT: ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VOTES TO ADMIT CHRISTIAN  
UNIONS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC) HAS DECIDED TO GRANT FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS TO APPLICATIONS FOR ETUC MEMBERSHIP FROM UNIONS AFFILIATED WITH THE EUROPEAN ORGANIZATION OF THE WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (EO/WCL). THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REJECTED A MOVE TO INCLUDE THE FRENCH CGT AND ITALIAN CGIL IN THE DECISION TO EXPAND ETUC MEMBERSHIP BUT VOTED TO CONTINUE "TALKS" WITH CGIL LEADERS WHICH COULD EVENTUALLY LEAD TO CGIL AFFILIATION. END SUMMARY.

2. ON JANUARY 25, THE ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VOTED TO EXTEND ETUC MEMBERSHIP TO EO/WCL UNIONS. UNDER THE TERMS OF THIS DECISION, APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP WILL BE CONSIDERED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS BUT THIS IS NOT CONSIDERED AN OBSTACLE TO THE AFFILIATION OF MOST EO/WCL UNIONS WITH THE TUC. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION ALSO STIPULATES THAT THE EO/WCL WILL CEASE TO EXIST WHEN THE AFFILIATION PROCESS IS CONCLUDED. EO/WCL UNIONS MAY RETAIN THEIR MEMBERSHIP IN THE WCL BUT THE WCL WILL NOT BE ACCORDED ANY OFFICIAL STATUS WITH THE ETUC. DESPITE THE EXCLUSION OF THE WCL, THE EO/WCL IS EXPECTED TO RATIFY THE ETUC TERMS OF AFFILIATION AT A MEETING SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 1.

3. THE ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VOTED 16 TO 1 AGAINST A PROPOSAL ADVANCED BY BELGIAN FGTB LEADER GEORGE DEBUNNE WHICH WOULD HAVE GRANTED AFFILIATION RIGHTS TO THE CGT AND CGIL ALONG WITH THE EO/WCL UNIONS. IT WAS AGREED HOWEVER THAT THE ETUC SECRETARIAT WOULD CONTINUE TALKS WITH CGIL LEADERS WHICH COULD EVENTUALLY LEAD TO CGIL AFFILIATION WITH THE ETUC.

4. THE OVERWHELMING REJECTION OF DEBUNNE'S PROPOSITION WAS PRIMARILY THE RESULT OF A GERMAN INITIATIVE SPEARHEADED BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
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DGB LEADER VETTER, WHO REPORTEDLY ISSUED A STRONGLY WORDED WARNING TO THE ETUC LEADERSHIP AGAINST THE ADMISSION OF COMMUNIST TRADE UNIONS IN THE ETUC. VETTER, ACCORDING TO ONE PARTICIPANT IN THE MEETING, STRESSED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH COMMUNIST LABOR CENTRALS, WHICH THE GERMANS SUPPORT, AND ORGANIC TIES WITH EAST BLOC UNIONS WHICH WOULD POSE A THREAT TO THE DEMOCRATIC LABOR MOVEMENT.

5. IN A SEPARATE ACTION, THE ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE APPROVED THE APPLICATION FOR ETUC MEMBERSHIP OF THE 185,000 MEMBER

DANISH CIVIL SERVANT AND FUNCTIONARY UNION (FTF). WITH THE ENTRY OF THE FTF AND EOC/WCL UNIONS THE ETUC WILL REPRESENT ABOUT 25 NATIONAL UNIONS IN 17 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WITH A TOTAL MEMBERSHIP APPROXIMATING 30 MILLION.

6. COMMENT: THE DECISIVE VOTE ON THE CGT-CGIL ISSUE IS DECEIVING. DEBUNE IS NOT THE ONLY ETUC LEADER FAVORING ADMISSION TO THE CGT-CGIL. LEADERS OF THE BRITISH TUC AND OTHERS WOULD HAVE SUPPORTED THE DEBUNNE PROPOSITION UNDER DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES. THE INTENSITY OF GERMAN OPPOSITION WAS UNDOUBTEDLY A FACTOR IN THE APPARENT DECISION OF THE TUC AND THE OTHER SUPPORTERS NOT TO FORCE THE ISSUE. SUPPORTING DEBUNNE COULD HAVE UNNECESSARILY CAUSED SERIOUS DIVISIONS WITHIN THE ETUC OVER THE COMMUNIST ISSUE AT A TIME WHEN A MAJORITY OF ETUC LEADERS ARE SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRESS OF EVOLVING REALTIONS WITH EAST EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CENTERS. WITH THE NOW CERTAIN ENTRY OF EO/WCL UNIONS, WHOSE LEADERS CLEARLY FAVOR CLOSER TIES WITH THE EAST AND WHO GO BEYOND THE DGB'S CONCEPT OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS, IT WOULD SEEM A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE ETUC POLICIES REGARDING EUROPEAN TRADE UNION UNITY ARE SIGNIFICANTLY REVISED. THE EXPANSION OF THE ETUC COULD ALSO PRECIPITATE FURTHER SLIPPAGE IN THE DECLINING INFLUENCE OF THE ICFTU AND WCL IN EUROPEAN LABOR AFFAIRS.GREENWALD

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** EAST WEST TRADE, MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS, LABOR UNIONS, EAST WEST SECURITY MEETINGS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 30 JAN 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** garlanwa  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974ECBRU00620  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** EC BRUSSELS  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t1974016/aaaaafky.tel  
**Line Count:** 138  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION SIL  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** garlanwa  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 21 MAR 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <21 MAR 2002 by worrelsw>; APPROVED <12 APR 2002 by garlanwa>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VOTES TO ADMIT CHRISTIAN UNIONS  
**TAGS:** ELAB, XG, ICFTU  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005